

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

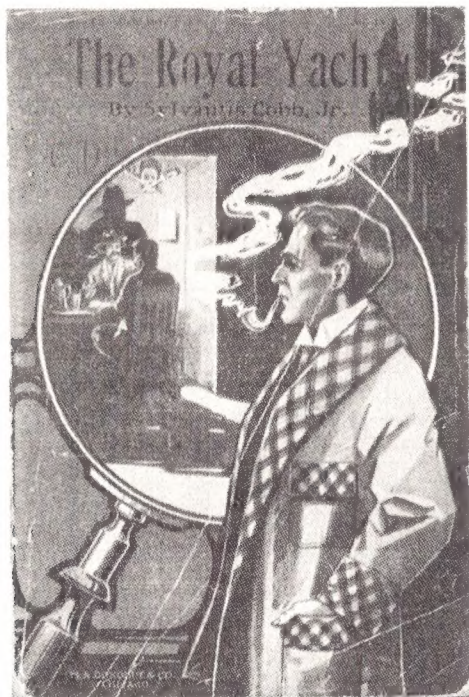
A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and study of old-time dime and nickel novels, popular story papers, series books, and pulp magazines

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Whole No. 631

DIME NOVEL SKETCHES



No. 270: THE FLASHLIGHT DETECTIVE SERIES

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THE HITCHING POST

Discover (dis-kuv'er) v.t. 1. to be the first to find out, see, or know about. 2. to find out; learn of the existence of; realize.

We have a pair of discoveries this time. What better way to begin a new volume and year of the magazine? While some of us have known of the existence of the Young Wild West films, none of us have seen them. We are now closer to that experience. Finding the true first printing of *The Bobbsey Twins* is as much a discovery. Even though not all of us can possess one, it's nice to know it exists.

Some of our regular features have been crowded out while your editor discovered more about desktop publishing. We plan on resuming the series on dime novel publishers in the April issue.

We have nearly completed an inventory of the available back issues of this magazine, presently in storage in your editor's basement and the basement of Rølvaag Memorial Library at St. Olaf College. We have too few copies of some issues and too many copies of others. Look for an opportunity to enhance your collection of the *Dime Novel Round-Up* in a future issue.

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YOUNG WILD WEST IN THE MOVIES

Larry Latham
Valencia, CA

From the time movies became a commercial enterprise, approximately one hundred years ago, they often turned to popular literature as source material. Sherlock Holmes first appeared on celluloid in 1903; Frankenstein made the first of his numerous screen appearances in 1910; Dumas's *Count of Monte Cristo* and *Three Musketeers* were among the very first screen adaptations. The nickel weeklies, being the cheap popular children's literature of the early silent era, could hardly have escaped the notice of fledgling film companies anxious for material and the early twentieth century version of promotional tie-ins. Sure enough, a little digging reveals that there were one reel series produced featuring Young Wild West, Nick Carter, Frank Merriwell, and possibly others.

Anyone with a good run of *Wild West Weekly* from 1912 would undoubtedly have been aware of this fact, as the magazine ran little blurbs across the top of some summer issues:

NOTICE! This story has been dramatized by the NESTOR FILM COMPANY and can be seen in all the Independent Motion Picture houses in the U.S.A.

In my own incomplete collection this blurb appears on issues 506 and 516. As there were only six films produced in the series and since, as we will shortly see, it is likely that either issue 506 or 516 was not filmed, we can assume that this ad was carried on all issues published during the film release "window." Given the lazy advertising ethics of the time and the novelty of the "fillums," it is unlikely that anyone would be upset if a story wasn't actually adapted.

Little is known about this series, other than a few odd scraps of information. Business records were only kept sporadically. The press and the public, even then, were quick to make a distinction between "A" and "B" pictures, between the "must see" pictures and the "programmers", and it is highly likely that the films in question fell below even the primitive standards of the time. Due to neglect and disinterest, few of the actual movies still exist, and those that do reside in foreign film libraries, much to the chagrin of financially strapped American film archives. Costs of striking a single print are prohibitive, and the potential audience is too small to mount a retrieval effort, even by well meaning

fans.

But all is not lost! Thanks to dedicated researchers and film historians like my friend Bob Birchard, some small, tantalizing bits of information survive. I'll try to get as much information as I can from his vast resource library on the other series mentioned above, but for now let us turn to Young Wild West.

Although the exact conditions may never be known, it is safe to say that sometime in early to mid-1912, a deal was struck between the Frank Tousey Publishing firm and the recently relocated-to-California Nestor Film Company. The subject of the agreement was the production of a series of films based on the lead character from Tousey's popular *Wild West Weekly*.

The Nestor Film Company was originally located in the east and was known as the Centaur Film Company. In the earliest days almost anyone could form a film company, but by 1911 the owners of the various motion picture patents were trying to squeeze out all the independent producers. This action forced many companies, including Centaur, to head for the wilds of Texas and California, where the long arm of the patent enforcers could not effectively reach. Changing their name to Nestor, after a wise mythological Greek general, the company proceeded to build the first studio in Hollywood, at the corner of Sunset and Gower (the area later famous as "Gower Gulch"). In late 1912, Nestor joined with a number of the other small independents (IMP, Champion, Rex and others) to form the Universal Film Manufacturing Company, which is still with us today. It was sometime between their relocation and the merger that the series of six Young Wild West films were produced and released.

The release dates for the Wild West pictures (June through August 1912) indicate that the negotiations for the rights may have actually taken place before the company's move west, with the production postponed until the new firm was established. Although a one reel film (ten minutes in length) could be shot in a day, and negotiations were similarly uncomplicated, long distance communication at that time would have been difficult. In addition, the California-based companies did their best to keep a low profile in order to thwart the patent holders.

Given the swift production schedules for the one reelers of the day (and we must remember that pictures longer than two reels were extremely uncommon before 1915's *Birth of a Nation*) it is likely that all films were shot in May of 1912. Film series like these were generally contracted for in groups of three or six, and production would run continuously until the group was completed. The films, like their magazine counterparts, were released weekly.

George Field was cast as Young Wild West, although from the accompanying

photograph (which is NOT from a YWW movie), it is hard to imagine his sharp, dark features framed by long golden curls!

Victoria Forde, who would later wed Tom Mix, was the female lead in all six productions. We can only assume that she played Arietta. Russel Basset, an older, heavyset character actor, rounded out the regular cast.

By matching the titles of the movies with the story titles in the magazine, we can make some fairly safe guesses about which film was made from which story. There are problems with this method, however, and it is just likely that the films only borrowed the titles of the issues in simultaneous release, and that the stories were entirely original. Only a viewing of the films will settle this matter, but below is the "best guess" scenario:

YOUNG WILD WEST LEADING A RAID (June 1912)

based on issue 505, *Young Wild West Leading a Raid; or, Arietta and the Bars of Gold*, June 21, 1912

YOUNG WILD WEST ON THE BORDER (July 1912)

based on issue 506, *Young Wild West at Yankee Camp; or, a Fourth of July on the Border*, June 28, 1912

YOUNG WILD WEST CORNERED BY APACHES (July 1912)

based on issue 507, *Young Wild West Cornered by Apaches; or, Arietta and the Poisoned Arrow*, July 5, 1912

YOUNG WILD WEST TRAPPING A TRICKY RUSTLER

(July 1912) based on issue 508, *Young Wild West and Innocent Ike; or, Trapping a Tricky Rustler*, July 12, 1912

YOUNG WILD WEST'S PRAIRIE PURSUIT (July 1912)

based on issue 509, *Young Wild West's Prairie Pursuit; or, Arietta a Captive*, July 19, 1912

YOUNG WILD WEST WASHING OUT GOLD (August 1912)

based on issue 511,¹ *Young Wild West Washing Out Gold; or, Arietta's Lucky Discovery*, August 2, 1912

If issue 505 is the basis for the first film in the series, then it is a pretty safe bet that the other films are linked to the issues listed above. However, there may be a spanner in the works in the guise of issue 516, dated September 6, 1912. It featured a story entitled *Young Wild West and the Mexican Deadshot; or, The*

¹ For reasons unknown, the story in issue 510, *Young Wild West and the Texas Cowboys; or, The Scrimmage with the Sheepmen*, July 26, 1912, was skipped and does not have a counterpart among the films listed.

Shooting Match on the Border, and it bears the Nestor advertisement across the top of the cover. This story appeared 3 to 5 weeks after the date of the last film release, and 9 weeks after the only film that shares a similar title, so it is unlikely to have been the basis for YOUNG WILD WEST ON THE BORDER.

There are several possible explanations for this:

1) The films would have still been in release, and since it is probable that the films were only very loosely based on the novels, the name of the story would have been an effective promotional piece. The major argument against this is the fact that none of the other stories between 512 and 520 had titles in any way similar to one of the six movies.

2) The advertising, as mentioned earlier, may have been intentionally inaccurate. Collectors with a run of issues from 505 to 520 could shed light on this possibility by determining if the advertisement was present on every issue during this time.² The similarity of the film and story titles, though, seem to bear out the fact that some attempt was made to tie the weekly issue directly to the current week's film release.

3) It is just barely possible that there was a second series of films planned, or perhaps even produced. Film production in that era was a much more flexible beast than its modern counterpart, and the popularity (measured in box office revenue) of a series could be determined within a week or two of release. It wasn't uncommon for the makers of serials to produce extra chapters if the first chapters proved particularly popular or to cut their losses if the opposite occurred.

If Nestor and the Tousey firm did contract for a second series of films, it may be that the public's reception of the first several films was less than what was expected. It would not have been difficult to shut down the production of the second series before it was finished, although it is more likely that the scripts were merely rewritten to omit reference to Young Wild West. If this were the case, then the decision not to proceed with the second series may have come too late to change the cover blurb.

After their initial release, and the subsequent "grind house" circuit, the prints

² Editor's Note: An examination of the set of *Wild West Weekly* in the George Hess Collection, University of Minnesota, reveals that the advertisement appeared on the covers of issues 505 (June 21, 1912) through 520 (October 4, 1912).

were probably sold (to make varnish!) or destroyed. Many silent films and serials met their end by providing fodder for large fires in newer productions. At the present time, the existence of only one of the Young Wild West films has been verified. YOUNG WILD WEST LEADING A RAID is held by the National Film Archive in the British Film Institute, London. It is rumored that another film may be in the film archives in Prague.

Perhaps someday we will actually get a chance to see these little bits of Americana, but given the fact that the series was not successful at a time when almost anything on film could sell a ticket, it might be best if we only view them in our imaginations.



George Field, movie actor

Photo from the collection of Robert S. Birchard



THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, 1911

THE BOBBSEY TWINS

OR

MERRY DAYS INDOORS AND OUT

BY

LAURA LEE HOPE

AUTHOR OF "THE BOBBSEY TWINS IN THE COUNTRY," ETC.



THE MERSION COMPANY
RAHWAY, N. J. NEW YORK

IS THERE HOPE FOR HOPE? OR, BATTLING WITH THE BOBBSEYS

John T. Dizer
Utica, NY

It seemed a simple request: verify that a Mershon copy of *The Bobbsey Twins; or, Merry Days Indoors and Out* was a first edition, but nothing is simple these days except this author. Before the dust had settled, I had spoken to every known owner of a Mershon Bobbsey, had involved the best researchers in the country, and had practically gone bankrupt with long distance telephone calls. And the end is not yet in sight. This writer knows more about the Bobbseys than he did, but not as much as he should.

Some people like to brag that they buy books in order to read them, not merely to stuff them on their shelves. If this writer had properly examined a Mershon Bobbsey, he would have realized that on the title page under Laura Lee Hope it reads, "Author of 'The Bobbsey Twins in the Country,' Etc. ..." And on page 196 it says, "What happened to the Bobbsey twins at Meadow Brook will be told in another book, which I shall call *The Bobbsey Twins in the Country*." *The Bobbsey Twins* was copyrighted by Mershon in 1904. *The Bobbsey Twins in the Country* was copyrighted by Chatterton-Peck in 1907. How in the world could it be listed as having already been written on the title page of a 1904 Mershon book?

So, what to do? The obvious first thing was to call the collectors with Mershon Bobbseys. There aren't many: Victoria Broadhurst, Audrey Buffington, Jerry Friedland, Arthur Sherman, and this writer. They were very helpful in telling me about their books and Art Sherman even sent me his copy to examine. The title page and text of all five copies are identical. The bindings are identical. All copies have three illustrations and a frontispiece.

Oddly enough, four of the five have "At Seven O'Clock A Supper Was Served" (p. 129) as the frontispiece while the Sherman copy has "Dat Chile Dun Gwine An' Buried Himself Alive" (p. 53). The Sherman copy is also inscribed "December 25, 1904." Is the Sherman copy earlier than the others or did Mershon switch frontispieces at will? What did they do with frontispieces in other series? Cary Sternick and I examined multiple copies of titles in such Mershon series as the Rover Boys and Flag of Freedom and Mershon singles

such as *A Schoolboy's Pluck*, but found no switching of frontispieces. This question is not yet answered, but it seems to be a random variation.

To try to broaden the research base, Lydia Schurman even made a special trip to the Library of Congress to check the Bobbseys in the Rare Book Collection. It turned out their copies are all later Grosset and Dunlap reprints.

How does the printing of these Mershon Bobbseys compare with the later G&D Bobbseys? Both the texts and printing of every *Bobbsey Twins* printed from 1904 until the story was rewritten in 1928—and a great many copies were examined—seem identical except for minor changes on the title page. It is certain that the same plates were used for all copies of the original version of *The Bobbsey Twins*. This is both logical and in line with Stratemeyer's practice with other books.

It would appear, then, that all five Mershon copies of *The Bobbsey Twins* examined, and apparently all Mershon copies, are first editions, the only difference among them being the frontispiece.

The original mystery, however, "What is a reference to a 1907 Chatterton-Peck *Bobbsey Twins in the Country* doing in a 1904 Mershon?" remains. To deepen the mystery, Bart Nyberg came up with an excerpt from the *United States Catalog Supplement: Books Published 1902-1905* which lists under "Laura Lee Hope" both *The Bobbsey Twins* and *The Bobbsey Twins in the Country* as in print in 1904 and both published by Mershon. They were advertised as "Bobbsey Twins Books for Little Men and Women" which seems to imply that a series was contemplated.

Deidre Johnson in her *Stratemeyer Pseudonyms and Series Books* also lists a 1904 Mershon date for *The Bobbsey Twins in the Country*, but I have insisted on the 1907 date. My belief is based on the copyright date of 1907 given in all known copies of *Country* and also on my recollection of my discussions with Harriet Adams 20 and 30 years ago. I remember her stating very definitely that her father, Edward Stratemeyer, wrote the 2nd and 3rd Bobbsey Twins for Chatterton-Peck at the time of the Chatterton-Peck/Grosset & Dunlap lawsuit of 1907-08 so as to have a three-volume series to transfer to Grosset & Dunlap. Memories of course are often suspect due to age and other infirmities. Johnson also doesn't remember where she got her 1904 date for *Country*. (Speaking of age: based on the ages given in that first book, Freddie and Flossie must now be 94 and Nan and Bert are pushing 98. All four are in better shape than this writer.)

The best guess seems to be that when Mershon printed *The Bobbsey Twins* in 1904, Stratemeyer had the idea for a series for younger readers and either had

a sequel or the prospect of a sequel waiting in the wings. In spite of Harriet's assertions and the Stratemeyer Syndicate records in the Beinecke collection at Yale (as reported by James Keeline), no Stratemeyer researcher believes that any of the Bobbsey Twins titles were personally written by Stratemeyer.

Be that as it may, it appears most probable that *Country* was not published by Mershon in 1904, by Stitt in 1905, or by Mershon in 1906. (Mershon became The Stitt Publishing Co. for a brief time in 1905, but reverted to Mershon in 1906.) Only after Mershon had been purchased by Chatterton-Peck in October 1906 did both *The Bobbsey Twins in the Country* and *The Bobbsey Twins at the Seashore* appear and both books were copyrighted and printed in 1907. One result of all the phone calls—in addition to a dividend by AT&T—was a clearer picture of the known printings of the first three Bobbsey Twins titles. Thanks to Jerry Friedland and Audrey Buffington in particular, who have the only known copies of some of these titles, we know for certain that all three of the titles were actually printed by Chatterton-Peck. We also know from these collectors that, as I speculated in my ACA paper of March 21, 1992, ("Who Were The Bobbseys?", *Yellowback Library*, no. 101, November 1992, 4-9) Grosset & Dunlap transitional Bobbseys do exist. They are identical to the Chatterton-Peck printings and include the Chatterton-Peck title page, but have Grosset & Dunlap on the spine.

So, let us summarize what we know or believe about the early printings of the first three titles of the Bobbsey Twins series.

Volume No. 1, *The Bobbsey Twins*. The size is about 4 3/4 inches by 6 3/4 inches while the later G&Ds are about 5 1/4 inches by 7 5/8 inches. The front cover is slate grey with orange letters. The two sets of twins are pictured on the front, standing, with orange and white clothes. There is a dark background of trees. The spine reads in gold

The/Bobbsey/Twins/line/Hope and at the bottom of the spine, in orange, The/Mershon/Co./orange line.

The end papers are blank and there are no advertisements.

The title page reads

The Bobbsey Twins/Or Merry Days Indoors And Out/By/Laura Lee Hope/Author of "The Bobbsey Twins In The Country," Etc./Mershon tulip logo/The Mershon Company/Rahway, N.J. [space] New York. The verso reads, Copyright, 1904, By/The Mershon Company/line/All rights reserved.

We know the book was published by Mershon in 1904, and presumably in 1906. In the case of this title there would be no discernible difference between

1904 and 1906 printings. There should be a 1905 Stitt Publishing Co. edition, but no copy is known. Based on present evidence any Mershon printing can be a first edition.

The 1906-07 Chatterton-Peck printing (based on the Garis/ Buffington copy) is essentially identical to the Mershon copy except for the publisher. In the Chatterton-Peck and transitional Grosset & Dunlap copies there are slight variations in the shades of gray cloth and the orange and yellow colors tend to become red and white. The first 1908 Grosset & Dunlap version was the Chatterton-Peck book with only the name on the spine changed.

From 1908 to circa 1912-13, the three books were printed in the well-known format—applique on the cover with the kids playing in the meadow—but there is one important difference. The wording at the top of the spine reads The/Bobbsey/Twins/line/Hope. Copies after 1913 have the title at the top but with the more familiar full name of Laura/Lee/Hope spelled out in the middle of the spine. All of the first three titles—but no later titles—have been seen in the first format. Since no titles in the series were added until *At School* and *At Snow Lodge* it leads us to suspect that a decision was made to expand the series in 1913 and that the spine was changed at that time.

Volume No. 2, *The Bobbsey Twins in the Country* possibly could have been issued in Mershon or Stitt, but there are no known examples. The binding of *Country*—except for the title—is almost identical in the smaller size (colors, picture and other details) to the bindings of both Mershon and Chatterton-Peck volume one. Based on current knowledge, any Chatterton-Peck *Country* is considered a first edition. The transitional Chatterton-Peck to Grosset & Dunlap format and the first Grosset & Dunlap format are identical to volume one.

Volume No. 3, *The Bobbsey Twins at the Seashore* is identical to the Chatterton-Peck binding of volumes one and two—except for the title—and also to volumes one and two in the Grosset & Dunlap reprints. Any Chatterton-Peck *Seashore* is considered a first edition.

Did I learn anything from all of this? I already knew that the top researchers and collectors in popular juvenile literature—in this case, Victoria Broadhurst, Audrey Buffington, Jerry Friedland, Bill Gowen, Didi Johnson, James Keeline, Bart Nyberg, Gil O'Gara, Lydia Schurman, Cary Sternick, Art Sherman, and Peter Walther—are not only tremendously knowledgeable, but also unbelievably friendly, patient and helpful. (It seems probable that they are also brave, clean and reverent.) I also learned that any Mershon *Bobbsey Twins*, regardless of the "Bobbsey Twins in the Country" on the title page, is as early as they come.

So it was probably worth it. At least for the telephone company.

CONVENTION REPORT:

Learning More about Series Books;
or, A Report on the 1994 SBCIEL Convention

Deidre Johnson
West Chester University

From September 22-25, 1994, participants in the Series Book Collectors in Earthquake Land Convention met at the Buena Park Hotel in Buena Park, California, enjoying the opportunity to mingle with authors and artists associated with series books, to view or purchase scarce items, and to learn more about the field.

SBCIEL opened with a mixer on Thursday evening sponsored by convention hosts Ken Bostic, Vicki Broadhurst, Cliff Erickson, Dave Farah, and Dan Josslin. Guests had an opportunity to chat and to meet some of the presenters including Nancy Axelrad and Rudy Nappi.

The first event Friday morning was my talk sketching the history of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, followed by an interview with Nancy Axelrad. Axelrad first discussed her work with the Stratemeyer Syndicate. Harriet Adams hired her as an editorial assistant in the 1950s; her duties included editing manuscripts and researching some of the informational material used in series books. In the early 1970s, she and Adams attended a cruise to gather material for Adams's revision of the Nancy Drew title *Mystery of the Brass-Bound Trunk*. On returning, they learned that Grosset & Dunlap wanted a new Bobbsey Twins book as soon as possible, so Adams came up with a title *The Bobbsey Twins on a Sun-Moon Cruise* and suggested that Axelrad write the story based on their cruise. This was Axelrad's first manuscript for the Syndicate; she went on to ghostwrite other Bobbsey Twins books and even to coauthor a Nancy Drew title. When asked about Syndicate partner Andrew Svenson, Axelrad remembered him as amiable and noted that the Happy Hollister series (which he wrote) incorporated incidents based on Svenson's own family.

Axelrad also answered questions from the audience. Based on Adams's recollections, Axelrad described Stratemeyer as a methodical man, religiously writing for several hours each morning before taking a stroll, having lunch, then returning to his work for another two hours. She added that Harriet Adams remembered the children had been told to remain absolutely quiet while their father was working. Finally, Axelrad provided a rare glimpse of Stratemeyer's wife, Magdalena, whom she characterized as "adoring" of Stratemeyer and as

an artist whose paintings showed promise.

The afternoon session began with Dave Farah's interview with Rudy Nappi, again followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience. Nappi told the audience that Grosset & Dunlap would give an illustrator credit on the title page of a series book only if the illustrator agreed to do both the cover and the internal art. Since Nappi didn't work on the internal art (because he didn't care for it and the payment was small), he's not identified on the title page—although his signature is frequently visible on the cover artwork. When someone asked why Nappi's early Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys covers weren't signed, Nappi replied that they were, but the signature was probably cropped; he added laughingly that he later moved his signature into the illustration, which prevented that. Nappi also spoke a bit about some of the changes in cover art. The monochromatic montage covers on the Nancy Drew books were his idea. He felt they'd be more visible in the book racks and submitted a rough sketch of his idea to the art director at Grosset & Dunlap, who approved it.

Afterwards, Laura Ruby, an artist who creates serigraphs based on Nancy Drew books, gave a slide talk about her art. She explained that her pieces incorporate many elements associated with Nancy Drew and create an interplay between literal and imaginative representations. As an example of the latter, some of her pictures include visual plays on the word Drew (everything from Nancy drawing to open dresser drawers) and even elements specific to individual titles (such as the bell pepper and reference to Sidney Toler as Charlie Chan in the serigraph based on *The Clue of the Tolling Bell*). The slide show also included a look at "Mise Unseen," her performance art based on Nancy Drew.

That evening, the Society of Phantom Friends hosted an informal get-together, including a raffle, gift exchange, and trivia contest, conducted by Kate Emburg. Kate also created the humorous and challenging questions for the contest, covering series as diverse as Billie Bradley and the Babysitters' Club—with a generous dose of Judy Bolton, of course. (Sample question: "Trixie Belden and Judy Bolton's best friends have the same nickname—give the nickname, then the friends' real names.") The winning team was an eclectic mixture: Garrett Lothe (editor of *Susabella Passengers*, a Beverly Gray series book fanzine), Kathy Fischel, Sue Grossman, Peter Hantf (author of *Bibliographia Oziana*), Rosemarie Jicristo (contributor to *Girls' Series Companion* and *Whispered Watchword*), and myself. We proudly sported our blue ribbons for the rest of the evening.

Saturday morning began with a session covering periodicals and books useful to series book researchers, followed by an interview and question-and-answer session with Joyce Brotman, producer of the *Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mystery*

Hour. Brotman explained the series originated because she and a friend wanted to try producing a television show. They were in her friend's kitchen racking their brains for promising ideas and spotted *The Nancy Drew Cookbook*. Initially, they encountered problems over the television rights to Nancy Drew but were able to obtain permission for the Hardy Boys. After acquiring rights to both series, Brotman recalled that it was less of a challenge to cast the Hardy Boys than Nancy Drew because everyone "had passionate opinions about Nancy Drew and how she should look." She also explained why so few of the existing books were adapted for the television series: the format of tv episodes is basically that of a four act play, one which needs room for dialogue to establish characters; the books, of course, don't fit this format. Moreover, the books have so many plot twists that they would take more than an hour onscreen.

After lunch came an interview and question and answer session with Bill Gillies. Gillies started working for Grosset & Dunlap after a friend who illustrated children's books suggested he talk with the art director. Russell Tandy had just left Grosset & Dunlap, so he began by creating new covers for Nancy Drew #19, receiving \$100 per cover. Gillies remembered using friends and relatives as models: his son can be seen as fair haired Joe Hardy on the cover of *The Secret of the Lost Tunnel*, while Gillies himself even appears as one of the men seated at the table on the cover of the Nancy Drew title *The Mystery at Lilac Lodge*. Like Nappi, Gillies felt the payment for interior art was not enough to justify the effort, and thus illustrated only covers.

The final afternoon session featured Frank Thomas, who played *Fed* Nickerson in the 1930s Nancy Drew movies and Tom Corbett in the 1950s television series. Thomas remarked that the Nancy Drew movies "were a lot of fun and we [he and Bonita Granville] enjoyed them." He remembered that the director strove for a contemporary feel: for example, the director wanted to include high-school slang and encouraged the actors to play around with the script accordingly. This modernization also accounted for his character's name change (from Ned to Ted): Ned had an old fashioned feel whereas Ted was a popular name at the time.

Saturday closed with a buffet dinner followed by an auction. Among the items for sale was a letter from Helen Keller to Edward Stratemeyer thanking him for his support, a typescript of a story by Mildred Wirt Benson, a photocopy of an early proposal from Edward Stratemeyer to Grosset & Dunlap outlining ideas for the Hardy Boys series, and three color sketches of the cover art for the KidStuff Nancy Drew books.

The convention ended Sunday at noon. Although there were no speakers, attendees could still pick up a few bargains from the dealers' room or take a last look in the display cases. The latter were a collector's wish list, all in one room. In addition to scarce series books (including a dust-jacketed edition of *Beverly Gray at the World's Fair*, a French edition of the first Tollivers book, and an autographed copy of *Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill*), the cases held such items as an animation cel from the Hardy Boys cartoon show, View-Master reels for *The Hardy Boys: The Mystery of the Caves*, lobby cards for *The Lost Volcano* and the Nancy Drew movies, the Cherry Ames nursing game, the 78-rpm record "Gold Doubloons and Pieces of Eight" (the theme song from the Walt Disney Hardy Boys serial), and Rudy Nappi's modelling photographs for various Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys covers. (We later learned that one latecomer thought the display room was the dealers' room and was quite disappointed when he couldn't write a check to purchase his favorite items!)

All in all, it was a wonderful convention, filled with informative sessions and marvelous memories.

Answer to trivia question: The girls' nickname was "Honey." Trixie's friend is Madeline Wheeler; Judy's is Grace Dobbs.

FOR SALE

Twelve *Penny Peep-Show* post cards, nos. 22-33 (July '46-Sept. '47)
Published by Fred T. Singleton. Includes *Beadle's Boy's Library*, Sweeney Todd, Nellie Bly, *New York Boys*, *Wild Oats*, and others, plus two 1932 postcards from Singleton to R. L. Caldwell.

\$100 for the lot or best offer

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(508) 358-2644

THE REFERENCE SHELF

Recent books in review, or forthcoming publications noted.

ALCOTT AGAIN

From Jo March's Attic: Stories of Intrigue and Suspense, by Louisa May Alcott. Edited by Madeleine B. Stern and Daniel Shealy. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993. xxxiv, 166 pp. \$21.95 (ISBN 1-55553-177-6)

It has been nearly twenty years since Madeleine Stern published the first collection of the unknown thrillers and potboilers that Louisa May Alcott wrote for the story papers and periodicals of the nineteenth century. Long hidden because of anonymous or pseudonymous publication in ephemeral publications of the day, these stories discovered by Leona Rostenberg changed forever the view of history of the author of *Little Women*.

This fifth collection contains nine short stories from *Frank Leslie's Lady's Magazine* along with the usual well-written introduction by Stern discussing the discovery as well as the themes of these stories. (Victor Berch was responsible for the discovery of this group of stories.) Daniel Shealy has provided a complete bibliography of the thrillers (published from 1858 to 1870) traced to Alcott to date, a total of 33 stories. This reveals only two titles as yet not reprinted.

The stories in the present collection are "Doctor Dorn's Revenge", "Countess Varazoff", "Fatal Follies", "Fate in a Fan", "Which Wins?", "Honor's Fortune", "My Mysterious Mademoiselle", "Betrayed by a Buckle", and "La Belle Bayadère" and were originally published between 1868 and 1870.

Previous collections of novelettes and stories were *Behind the Mask: The Unknown Thrillers of Louisa May Alcott* (New York: William Morrow, 1975), *Plots and Counterplots: More Unknown Thrillers of Louisa May Alcott* (New York: William Morrow, 1976), *A Double Life: Newly Discovered Thrillers of Louisa May Alcott* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), and *Freaks of Genius: Unknown Thrillers of Louisa May Alcott* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991). In addition, two stories were included in *Louisa May Alcott: Selected Fiction* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1991).

These six books should be on the shelves of every reader of nineteenth century American fiction, of Louisa May Alcott, and of good sensational fiction. Let us hope that the earlier volumes will be reissued or that all 33 stories will be collected between one set of covers.

jrc

THE HARDY BOYS UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

Charles Heffelfinger. *The Bayport Companion*. 2nd edition. Privately printed, 1994. 102 pp. Illustrated. Paper covers. \$15.00 ppd. Available from the author at 7011 18th Street, Tampa FL 33610

Tony Carpentieri. *Frank and Joe Turn Blue*. 3rd edition. Rheem Valley, CA: SynSine Press, 1994. vi, 248 pp. Illustrated. Spiral binding. (ISBN 0-9639949-9-9) \$24.95 postpaid. Box 6422 Rheem Vally, CA 94570 (CA residents add \$2.06 tax).

These latest guides for collectors of the Hardy Boys describe the different printings of the earliest titles in the series. Heffelfinger, admittedly indebted to *Farah's Guide* to Nancy Drew (reviewed here last issue) for format and concept, goes a long way to establishing rigid standards for collectors. For this he is to be congratulated. He covers the first 40 titles (those issued with dust jackets), giving up to 55 different printings for each from the first printing in the initial year of publication through 1961. There are more than 1200 printings covered. All of this somewhat arcane information is clarified by his section on how to use the book. Besides basic abbreviations and an explanation of a sample entry, he includes a publishing history of the series and a description of the formats. In addition he includes Hardy Boys memorabilia, comic books, games, record albums, and other collectibles.

Carpentieri covers 58 titles, concentrating on the picture cover editions. As such, he admits to striking out to cover new territory since all the printings have not yet been identified. He covers more details than Heffelfinger, including authorship, and as an added bonus illustrates his guide with some of the model photographs Rudy Nappi used in planning his cover paintings. His is a more informal approach than Heffelfinger, but he is equally meticulous in his description.

It would be difficult to rate these two guides according to priority. Each addresses a different aspect of collecting. They demonstrate the fascination with minutia that collecting can involve. Even this reviewer, who is not usually interested in the fine details, got caught up in trying to identify the titles in his own collection, which began with a Christmas gift of *The Secret Panel* in 1946. For the truly serious collector of the Hardy Boys each is valuable, and if you can afford both, then get both.

GIRLS SERIES BOOK COLLECTING

Society of Phantom Friends. *The Girls Series Companion*. 1994 edition. Privately printed. 358 pp. in a 3-ring binder. \$40 ppd. Available from Kate Emburg, 4100 Cornelia Way, N. Highland, CA 95660; checks payable to Kate Emburg.

One of the continuing challenges of studying or collecting series books is gathering information about the contents of specific series or titles. The Society of Phantom Friends' original *Girls' Series Encyclopedia* (1988), an annotated bibliography of girls' series, was a groundbreaking attempt to remedy the situation. Subsequent editions issued under the title *The Girls' Series Companion* continue to update and expand this work.

The 1994 edition of *The Girls' Series Companion* contains entries for approximately 500 girls' series, most published between 1900-94. It includes series united by a continuing location or situation, mixed-gender series that depict a girl's point-of-view, and select 19th-century series. Anthropomorphic, thematic, boys', and tots' series are excluded, as are series intended for children under eight.

Entries are arranged alphabetically by series. All list the author and/or pseudonym, individual volumes and their publication dates, and some information about series publishers and formats. Author, illustrator, and publisher indexes provide a convenient cross-reference.

What distinguishes *The Girls' Series Companion* from other bibliographies, of course, are the annotations. Most entries begin by describing the series' premise and central characters, and, in some cases, commenting on style or parallels with other series. These paragraphs are clearly and engagingly written, packed with useful information. Many entries also include a synopsis of events in individual volumes and, where applicable, information about spinoff series or related merchandise. As is to be expected in an ongoing, volunteer project, the extent of the annotations varies: some entries have only 1-2 sentences; others provide a detailed overview of a series. All, however, are useful. Indeed, paging through the book is like taking a brief course on the history and scope of girls' series.

This is a highly readable and informative guide for the series book novice and an indispensable one for the serious researcher or collector.

Deidre A. Johnson
West Chester University

CONCERNING PULPS

Patriots' Death Battalion, by Curtis Steele (Emile Tepperman) In *Pulp Review* #19 (January 1995). \$6.00, plus \$1 postage from The Pulp Collector Press, P.O. Box 3232, Frederick, MD 21705

The war waged by Jimmy Christopher, Operator #5, against the Central Empire moves into its second stage in this novel from the August-September 1936 issue of the pulp magazine. Verisimilitude is maintained by frequent footnotes to assist the new reader in catching up. That this was written only months before publication is attested to by a reference to an article in the May 1936 *Reader's Digest*. And can anyone not keep reading stories that contain such splendid foolishness as this passage?

Z-7 looked at Jimmy, and there was moisture in his eyes. "You've done the impossible, Jimmy! You've captured a whole flight of enemy planes, intact, ready for use; and you did it without leaving the ground!"

"Now comes the hard part, Chief," Jimmy said. "You've got to take one of those planes, and fly back." (Chapter 7)

At least two more of this series are promised in the months ahead.

The Pulp Collector Vol. 6 no. 4 (Whole no. 24), 1994. \$6.00, plus \$1 postage from The Pulp Collector Press.

From the publisher of *Pulp Review*, this annual of articles and facsimile reprints contains a report on Pulpecon "A" by Al Tonik and one on Pulpecon 23 by Michael Avallone. Will Murray discusses one of the villains in the Doc Savage series in "Genesis: Cadwiler Olden," Kristin Ladnier describes a short-lived pulp character in "The Scorpion: As Nasty as He Wants to Be," Nick Carr surveys "A Few Hard to Find Western Pulp", Michael Avallone contributes a short mystery, "Letter from Ed Noon," Al Tonik covers "The Authors of Western Series Stories in Standard Magazines" (the topic of a PCA paper a few years ago), and Daryl Herrick presents "The Doc Savage Lawsuit That Wasn't." Kurt Ladnier concludes with a demonstration of the origin of the cover illustration for the July 1946 issue of *Mammoth Adventure* in a Barbasol advertisement from 1937. The facsimile short story is Robert Leslie Bellem's "Heritage of Madness". jrc

Behind the Mask, No. 29, November 1994. \$4.85 a copy, \$19.00 for 4 issues. Tom and Ginger Johnson, 504 E. Morris Street, Seymour, TX 76380

Reprints pulp stories "Death Out of Thin Air" by Stuart Towne (pseud. of Clayton Rawson) from *Red Star Mystery*, August 1940; "Black Star's Subterfuge" by John Mack Stone (pseud. of Johnston McCulley) from *Detective Story Magazine*, October 5, 1916; "Beauty Trap" by Ray King from *G-Man Detective*, July 1947. EL

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS RECEIVED

Marcus Klein. *Easterns, Westerns and Private Eyes: American Matters, 1870-1900*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994. 216 pp. \$40.00. pap. \$17.95

Carol Nackenoff. *The Fictional Republic: Horatio Alger and American Political Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. 364 pp. \$35.00

Yellowback Library, No. 126 (December 1994) [Series Books, dime novels, and related literature] Gil O'Gara, P. O. Box 36172, Des Moines, IA 50315

Martha's KidLit Newsletter, Vol. 6, no. 6 (Christmas 1994) [For Antiquarian and Out of Print Children's Booklovers] Martha Rasmussen, Box 1488, Ames, IA 50014

The Susabella Passengers and Friends, November 1994 [A nostalgia publication for collectors of the Beverly Gray mystery series plus all other children's series books] Garrett Lothe, 80 Ocean Pines Lane, Pebble Beach, CA 93953

The Horatio Alger Society Newsboy, Vol. 32, no. 6 (November-December 1994) [For collectors of Horatio Alger and other juvenile series authors] Robert E. Kasper, 585 E. St. Andrews Drive, Media, PA 19063

ECHOES, Vol 14, no. 1 (February 1995) Whole no. 78 [For pulp magazine collectors] Fading Shadows, Inc. 504 E. Morris Street, Seymour, TX 76380

John Springhall, "'Disseminating impure literature'" the 'penny dreadful' publishing business since 1860," *The Economic History Review* 47 (August 1994): 567-584.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I'd like to put DNR readers onto Larry McMurtry's *Anything for Billy* (Simon & Schuster, 1988; Pocket Books, 1989), if they have not yet read this story of a dime novel reader-turned-writer when his wife destroys his dime novel stash. McMurtry is, I believe, the finest Western fictioneer practicing his craft today and he tells a first-rate story in *Anything for Billy*; a story full of references to fictitious dime novels and dime novel characters.

John Dinan
Topsfield, MA

Congratulations and good luck! I am delighted with the new format.

Bill Kline
Bethpage, NY

You are doing a great job and I enjoy the *Round-Up* more than ever! Keep up the good work. [But] please go back to white covers!

Robert Finnan
Malverne, NY

My compliments on a fine job [as editor].

Babe Swift
Yonkers, NY

I am really enjoying the stories you've run recently and the format is super. Keep up the good work.

Brad Chase
Enfield, CT

The *DNR* looks great! I can't think of *anyone* who (better than you) could take up the editorship where Eddie left off.

Ralph Gardner
New York City

Re the question of advertising, *DNR* is primarily, and obviously, an information forum. But do not forget those of us who find ourselves in rural settings or in cities founded after the heyday of dime novel publishing. I, for one, seldom see dime novels, or pulps for that matter, and seldom have an opportunity to buy

examples of any sort. I wouldn't mind seeing more advertising by subscribers and booksellers. Where else do you suggest I go?

Joseph Blackburn
Lubbock, TX

Ed: This is a good point. Would anyone like to recommend good sources besides the *Round Up*? If we get enough we will consider a "marketplace" section to remind readers where to write or look.

I wanted to write you a quick note to compliment you on the December issue of the *DNR*...For the purpose of the magazine, I would recommend no more than 20% ads. Many people complain that *YL* has too many ads, but some people celebrate that fact. I know that past issues of both the *DNR* and *Newsboy* were indexed in the *MLA Bibliography*, but in the past few years issues have not been included. I think that either issues or abstracts of the main articles need to be sent to the MLA index department to ensure inclusion. Do you know anything about this? We may want to make an effort to get the issues from the past five years or so in the bibliography which should improve the opinion of the magazine in the estimation of academics.

James Keeline
Prince and the Pauper
Collectible Children's Book Store

Ed: Although we continue to send a complimentary subscription to the Modern Language Association, the annual *MLA Bibliography* stopped indexing the *Dime Novel Round-Up* in 1990. We have written two letters to the editor of the Bibliography to try to get reinstated, but have had no response.

NOTES & QUERIES

Corrections Dept. In the December 1994 **Round-Up** we erred in giving the date of Theodore Roscoe's death as 1993. He died May 29, 1992, and we published Rocco Musemeche's tribute to him in issue number 618 (December 1992), pp. 113-114. We also wish to thank Charlie Shibuk, Bronx, New York, for reminding us that Charlie Chan did not debut in 1922, as stated in Jon Suter's article, but in 1925 (**DNRU**, Dec. 1994, p. 108). *The House Without a Key*, by Earl Derr Biggers, was serialized in *The Saturday Evening Post* from

January 24 to March 7, 1925.

Speaking of Theodore Roscoe, we mentioned *Toughest in the Legion*, a collection of his Thibault Corday stories, in December, but did not have the contents to report at the time. Thanks to Brian Kenknight of Northfield, Minnesota, we can now list them (all reprinted from *Argosy*) as "The Kid and the Cutthroats" (January 2, 1937), "Toughest in the Legion," (February 4, 1933), "Monkey See, Monkey Do" (September 4, 1937), "The Devil Who Played God" (April 11, 1936), and "The Ears of Donkey Daudette" (January 19, 1935).

Literary References: From time to time we come upon a mention of our favorite subjects in books, magazines, or other forms of media. Ed Lauterbach (who signs "EL" to his book reviews here) recently shared with your editor a passage from a British boys' book which book collector Ray Engel of Frankenmuth, Michigan, had sent him.

"Book-shelves," he explained, in the short, sharp sentences characteristic of him. "For your Headmaster? No. For the village schoolmaster? No. Who for, then? For me. Me, Sam Sharr. Collector of books. Boys' books. No other sort. Books I read when a kid. Best of any. None like 'em."

"What do you mean, Sharr?" Ben asked. "Arithmetic books, old English grammars—"

"School books? No. Couldn't settle to 'em, somehow. Like Impy! Adventure books. Harrison Ainsworth's. Fenimore Cooper's. Captain Mayne Reid's. And others. Hundreds of 'em. Some first editions. Very rare."

"I say, that sounds jolly," Ben commented. "Could we see some of them, please?"

"Like to?"

"Immensely."

The wheelwright looked at their eager faces and his own lighted up also. Very deliberately he put aside his spokeshave and took off his apron. Then he pointed to a bowl and some soap.

"All wash hands," he said. "Keep books clean. Very particular. Some priceless. Worth weight in gold. To me, anyhow. Hundred pounds offered for them. Wouldn't part for thousands. You'll soon see why."

Five minutes later they were looking round a library which none

would have dreamed of finding in a wheelwright's cottage. It had shelves from floor to ceiling, with a small ladder to reach the upper rows. Arranged beneath the window were three cosily-cushioned reading-chairs, with bookstands in front of them which could be adjusted to any height or angle.

"Made 'em all myself," the owner proudly declared. "Chairs, desks, everything. Shelves full. Short of room. ... Look round, boys."

"I don't know where to start," Ben confessed. "They all look so tempting."

"Show you some. Here's one. *The Headless Horseman*. Mayne Reid. Original edition. As first illustrated. Gem! 'Nother one. *Jack Sheppard*. Harrison Ainsworth. Ever read it? You should. Fine stuff! *Jack Harkaway's Schooldays*. Written by a famous barrister. *Jack Harkaway at Oxford: amongst Brigands: amongst Indians*. All in penny numbers. Boys used to go wild over 'em. Not classical, but healthy. Lot more like 'em. Pictures by 'Phiz.' Famous artist. Illustrated Dickens's works. Also Thackeray's. Not penny dreadfuls. I despise those. Wholesome reading. Queer hobby for me. Father of family. What?"

R. A. H. Goodyear.

The Boys of Castle Cliff School

London: Blackie & Son, [1936]

pages 34-35

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CALL TO CONVENTION!**POPULAR CULTURE ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN CULTURE ASSOCIATION**

The 25th annual meeting of the Popular Culture Association and the 17th annual meeting of the American Culture Association will convene from April 12 to 15, 1995 at the Marriott Hotel, Philadelphia. On the program will be several presentations by members of the Area for Dime Novels, Juvenile Series Books, and Pulp Magazines. For further information regarding the program, write Kathleen Chamberlain, P. O. Box 116, Emory, VA 24327. To register, send \$70 (\$30 for students and retired) to Pat Browne, Popular Culture Association, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403. jrc

PIONEERS, PASSIONATE LADIES, AND PRIVATE EYES

Pioneers, Passionate Ladies, and Private Eyes: the Library of Congress Symposium on Dime Novels, Series Books, and Paperbacks will be held Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10, 1995, at the James Madison Building in Washington, D.C. The symposium will be sponsored jointly by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, headed by Dr. Larry E. Sullivan, and the Center for the Book, directed by Dr. John Y. Cole.

Highlights of the symposium will include a plenary session at which author Madeleine B. Stern will be the featured speaker on "The Influence of Louisa May Alcott on Dime Novel Literature," and an exhibit highlighting collections of dime novels, series books, and paperbacks housed in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division.

Details about registration for those who wish to attend the symposium may be obtained by writing Clark W. Evans, Senior Reference Specialist, Rare Book Room, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540, or by phoning him at (202) 707-2017. Final details will be announced in the April *Dime Novel Round-Up*.

Clark W. Evans
Library of Congress

Dime Novel Round-Up

Guidelines for Contributors

We welcome articles on any aspect of the areas of dime novels (1860-1915), juvenile series books (1850-1945), and pulp magazines (1896-1950). Scholarly articles, reports of significant research, notes, and book reviews are needed. Manuscripts normally should not exceed 10 typed pages in length although longer ones will be considered. Notes and reviews should be no more than 500 words, feature articles no more than 2,500 words.

All pages must be typewritten or computer printed, double-spaced. Computer users should include a copy on diskette, preferably in WordPerfect 5.1 or ASCII format. Illustrations that accompany a manuscript should be black and white photographs or sharp xeroxes in color or black and white.

Whenever possible your style, bibliography, and notes should be in accordance with the *Chicago Manual of Style* (14th edition) or *The MLA Style Manual* (1985). The exception is a citation to dime novels where Albert Johannsen's *House of Beadle & Adams* (1950) is the preferred format.

Please submit your manuscripts to the office of the editor. Allow two months for a decision.

Dime Novel Round-Up
J. Randolph Cox, Editor
P.O. Box 226
Dundas, MN 55019-0226

WANTED

Seaside Library dime novels published by George Munro, 1870s to 1880s.
Need nos. 5, 16, 43, 57, 60, 64, 68, 72, 75, 84, 87, 90, 93, 97, 111, 131, 414, 466, 505, 510, 520, 634, 647, 710, 818, 833, 976, 1043, 1092, 1519, 1677, 1716, 2039.

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The Greatest Triumph of All 1901 |
| 10. Frank Merriwell's Sports Afield . . 1903 | 25. Frank Merriwell in Camp 1904 |
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| 12. Frank Merriwell's Daring 1903 | 27. Frank Merriwell's Cruise 1898 |
| 13. Frank Merriwell's Skill. 1903 | 28. Frank Merriwell's Lads or,
The Boys Who Got Another Chance 1911 |
| 14. Frank Merriwell's Champions . . . 1904 | |
| 15. Frank Merriwell's Return to Yale . 1904 | |

ARTHUR SHERMAN

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